(b) if so, the date from which the Service would be created; and

(c) what would be the main functions of the proposed Service?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) to (c) A suggestion has been put forward by the Chief Election Commissioner with regard to the creation of an All India Election Service. It has been placed before the Committee on Electoral Reforms for consideration.

Foundry Pig Iron Projects in Orissa

292. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number and locations of the Foundry Pig Iron Projects set up in Orissa;

(b) the capacity of each of these projects;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to set up more such Plants in Orissa; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI) : (a) and (b) Only one pig iron unit, with a capacity of 1 lakh tonne per annum has so far been set up in Orissa at Barbil (Keonjhar).

(c) and (d) With a view to encourage production of pig iron in the secondary sector this industry has been delicensed. Interested entrepreneurs have also been assured of assistance. Certain parties have been issued rgistration for the establishment of new pig iron unit in Orissa.

Smuggled Goods Confiscated by Customs Authorities

293. SHRI M. VINCENT : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the value in rupees of smuggled goods confiscated by the Customs Authorities during 1989 ; and

(b) what is the value in rupees of the arms and ammunitions confiscated during 1989 especially in Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE) : (a) The total value of the smuggled goods recovered by the Customs authorities all over India during 1989 was Rs. 554.59 crores.

(b) The total value of arms and ammunitions recovered in Tamil Nadu State by the Customs authorities in 1989 was reportedly Rs. 1.64 lakhs.

Debt Service Ratio

294. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the total external debt as on the 31st December, 1989 ;

(b) what is the debt service ratio at present ; and

(c) what steps have been taken to reduce the debt service ratio?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE) : (a) The total medium and long-term external debt excluding NRI deposits at the end of March, 89 is estimated to be Rs. 68831 crores.

The information as on 31st December, 1989 is not readily available as the accounts for the period are yet to close.

(b) The debt service ratio is ormally computed on the basis of debt service payments as percentage of current receipts. On this basis the debt service payments (*i.e.* repayment of principal and payment of interest) is estimated to be 23 per cent of exports of goods and gross invisible receipts during 1988-89.

(c) The Government has taken a number of steps to boost exports and to increase invisible earnings to ensure efficient import substitution and to reduce dependency on external financing.

Price Rise in the country

295. SHRI M. A. BABY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state the price rise during the months of December, 1989 and January and February, 1990 in comparison to the corresponding periods of the previous three years?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE) : The requisite information is given below :

Month Percentage Change in WPI (1981-82=100) over previous month

	1990	1989	1988	1987
December	—	—0·5	—0·8	0·7
January	0·4	1·0	0·8	0·6
February	0·8	0·1	0·3	—0·4

Announcement of Indira Mahila Yojana on the eve of Lok Sabha Elections

296. SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government has taken note of the announcement of the Indira Mahila Yojana by the previous Government on the eve of the Lok Sabha elections;

(b) whether the Chief Election Commissioner had expressed his displeasure over the announcement ; and

(c) if so, what corrective measures are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Taking into consideration all relevent material the Election Commission felt that the announcement of Indira Mahila Yojana by the previous Government on the eve of the Lok Sabha elections was a border line case of violation of the Model Code of Conduct evolved by the Election Commission.

(c) The Model Code of Conduct for the guidance of political parties and candidates evolved by the Election Commission already contains the necessary gividelines in such matters. The question of providing a statutory backing to the said code is under consideration of the Committee on Electoral Reforms appointed by the Government to go into various proposals for electotal reforms.

Appointment of Judicial Commission

297. SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to appoint a Judicial Commission;